

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Alvechurch CofE Middle School

Birmingham Road, Alvechurch, Birmingham, West Midlands B48 7TA

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Inspection dates:

8 and 9 April 2025

## Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is David Snell. This school is the only school in a single-academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of directors, chaired by Louise Wilde.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Alvechurch CofE Middle School. Academic and wider opportunities, such as clubs, trips and activities, enable them to flourish. As one pupil, who shared the views of many, said 'the school gives us lots of opportunities to grow and it feels safe and welcoming.' This is a warm and friendly school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They consistently show respect and courtesy towards each other.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. These are realised through the school's broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning. They are supported effectively through engaging learning opportunities, which enable them to achieve well. Reading forms an integral part of the pupils' learning experience. Pupils benefit from the opportunities they have to explore the wider world through books chosen to broaden their horizons.

Pupils' learning extends beyond the classroom to include the many other opportunities which the school provides. Clubs and activities cater for a significant range of interests and are very inclusive. Pupils speak highly of them, including the sports clubs, the school choir, chess club and arts and crafts opportunities.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has continued to revise its curriculum to enhance further the high standards it sets. For example, in English the school has reviewed how grammar and spelling are

taught to ensure pupils learn and remember more of the key knowledge they need to write accurately. As a result, pupils write with higher levels of sophistication and precision. Processes for checking pupils' learning have also been refined. These are now more systematic to ensure that teachers identify and close gaps in learning and address misconceptions. High levels of consistency in teaching across school ensures pupils have the support they need to succeed. They are moved on to complex tasks when they are ready.

The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) means that their needs are identified rapidly and with accuracy. Teachers have the information they need to adapt learning for pupils appropriately. This is consistent across school. Additional adults, who are knowledgeable about their roles, also help pupils with SEND to achieve well.

The school quickly identifies pupils who need support with their reading. It provides intensive support to ensure these pupils can read with appropriate fluency. Pupils enjoy stimulating texts, which are part of the school's curriculum. They also benefit from extensive wider reading opportunities, often linked to the on-site local library.

Attendance at the school is very high for all groups of pupils. The school is proactive in how it works with families should there be any concerns. This means that pupils have the early support they need to attend regularly. Behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. In lessons, pupils concentrate and do their best, even when the tasks are challenging. They understand the importance of perseverance. At social times, pupils play together harmoniously. They celebrate difference and understand how important it is that nobody feels left out.

The school is especially proud of its programme for pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught the key knowledge they need to keep themselves safe and healthy, as well as information about future destinations or employment. They also learn extensively about different faiths and cultures. The provision for clubs, activities and trips is exemplary. The school ensures there are a significant range of clubs for all pupils, covering a range of interests. Pupils can have the opportunity to try something new at school, as well as deepen their experience of any pre-existing hobbies. The school ensures all pupils have access and are able to participate.

Leaders have acted effectively to continue to raise standards, which were already high. Directors are ambitious for the school and ensure they have the information they need to challenge leaders in a supportive way. Staff are very positive about how leaders engage with them around workload. They appreciate the opportunities for their own professional development.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2012.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143507
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344113
<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9 to 13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	436
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of directors
<b>Chair of directors</b>	Louise Wilde
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Snell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.alvechurchmiddle.co.uk">www.alvechurchmiddle.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is the only school in Alvechurch CofE Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Worcester. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in February 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due in the academic year 2026/27.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- As part of this inspection, the inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders, teaching staff and other employees in the school. Inspectors also talked informally to pupils to gather general information about school life. The lead inspector also met the directors. Director minutes were scrutinised.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors discussed with leaders and pupils the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and their careers and personal development programmes.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records with school leaders.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including plans to improve the school.
- The inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

## **Inspection team**

Andrew Madden, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jane Epton

Ofsted Inspector

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